

2025 HOUSE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS

HB 1186

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Political Subdivisions Committee Room JW327B, State Capitol

HB 1186
1/16/2025

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-02 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to designating the Knife River flint as the official state rock.

9:57 a.m. Chairman Longmuir opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Longmuir, Vice-Chairman Fegley, Vice-Chairman Jonas, Representatives Bolinske, Davis, Hager, Hatlestad, Heilman, Klemin, Motschenbacher, Ostlie, Toman, Warrey

Discussion Topics:

- Knife River flint history
- Difference between rock and stone
- Classification of different stones

9:58 a.m. Representative Dan Vollmer, North Dakota Representative for District 6, introduced the bill.

9:59 a.m. David Cauley, Teacher in the Bottineau School District, testified in favor.

10:02 a.m. Senator Paul Thomas, North Dakota Senator for District 6, testified in favor.

10:03 a.m. Michelle Cauley, Natural Resources and Geology instructor at Dakota College, testified in favor.

10:04 a.m. Bottineau Elementary School Students, testified in favor.

10:09 a.m. Representative Davis moved a Do Pass.

10:09 a.m. Representative Bolinske Seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Donald W. Longmuir	Y
Representative Clayton Fegley	Y
Representative Jim Jonas	Y
Representative Macy Bolinske	Y
Representative Jayme Davis	Y
Representative LaurieBeth Hager	Y
Representative Patrick R. Hatlestad	Y
Representative Matthew Heilman	Y
Representative Lawrence R. Klemin	Y
Representative Mike Motschenbacher	Y

Representative Mitch Ostlie	Y
Representative Nathan Toman	Y
Representative Jonathan Warrey	Y

10:19 a.m. Motion passed 13-0-0

10:20 a.m. Representative Bolinske will carry the bill.

Additional written testimony:

Kevin Herrmann, Beulah resident, submitted testimony in opposition #29412.

10:21 a.m. Chairman Longmuir closed the hearing.

Wyatt Armstrong, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
HB 1186 ([25.0812.01000](#))

Political Subdivisions Committee (Rep. Longmuir, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (13 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1186 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

Written testimony of House Bill 1186

Chairman Longmuir and Political Subdivision Committee Members

My name is Kevin Herrmann from Beulah, North Dakota.

I stand oppose to House Bill 1186. I grew on a farm north of Zap which the cropland was known to be very rocky. I had to pick rocks with my two hands. We did not have equipment to the pick the rocks. I still remember the different type of rocks in every field.

Knife River flint is not an official rock. This bill is a bad state policy. There are more important bills in this legislative session to deal with.

I am asking House Political Subdivision committee to give House Bill 1186 a "DO NOT PASS" recommendation.

Kevin Herrmann
300 Fair St. SW
Beulah, ND 58523
701-880-9193 (cellphone)

2025 SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

HB 1186

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Energy and Natural Resources Committee Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

HB 1186
3/14/2025

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-02 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to designating the Knife River flint as the official state rock.

9:06 a.m. Chairman Patten opened the meeting.

Members present:

Chairman Patten, Vice Chairman Kessel, Senators: Beard, Boehm, Enget, Gerhardt, and Van Oosting.

Discussion Topics:

- Rock types and candidates
- Knife River Flint attributes
- Geological Heritage

9:07 a.m. Representative Vollmer, District 6, introduced the bill.

9:08 a.m. Michelle L. Cauley, Natural Resources Instructor & Bottineau Rockhounds Advisor, Dakota College of Bottineau, testified in favor and submitted testimony #39392.

9:11 a.m. Anna Sand, 3rd grade, testified in favor.

9:11 a.m. Keilana Grosgebauer, 4th grade, testified in favor.

9:12 a.m. Emmitt Bentley, 4th grade, testified in favor.

9:13 a.m. Kya Bohl, 6th grade, testified in favor.

9:14 a.m. David Cauley, Teacher, Co Advisor Rockhounds, testified in favor.

9:15 a.m. Edward C. Murphy, ND Dept of Mineral Resources, testified in favor and submitted testimony #41481.

9:18 a.m. Anna Sand and Silas, students answered committee questions.

9:22 a.m. Silas, student, answered questions.

9:23 a.m. Chairman Patten closed the hearing.

9:23 a.m. Senator Beard moved a Do Pass.

9:23 a.m. Senator Van Oosting seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Dale Patten	Y
Senator Greg Kessel	Y
Senator Todd Beard	Y
Senator Keith Boehm	Y
Senator Mark Enget	Y
Senator Justin Gerhardt	Y
Senator Desiree Van Oosting	Y

Motion Passed 7-0-0.

9:25 a.m. Senator Van Oosting will carry the bill.

9:27 a.m. Chairman Patten closed the hearing.

Kendra McCann, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
HB 1186 ([25.0812.01000](#))

Energy and Natural Resources Committee (Sen. Patten, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (7 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1186 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

In what started off as an opportunity to combine a love for geology and a passion to learn more about civics, the Bottineau Rockhounds are excited to support and promote Knife River Flint as their candidate for the North Dakota State Rock.

The Bottineau Rockhounds, a group of 2nd – 9th grade geology enthusiasts, with the assistance on their advisors and instructors (History/Science teacher David Cauley, 5th grade teacher Carrie Reimche, and Dakota College at Bottineau Natural Resources Instructor Michelle Cauley) explored the idea of a different type of “Rock the Vote” activity this past November.

Students completed research on rocks commonly found in North Dakota and filled out a “Candidate Nomination Form” for a rock they wanted to enter as a final candidate back in September 2024. These candidate forms included requirements for their rock – including the identification of the stone being either Igneous, Sedimentary, or Metamorphic, a shaded in map to indicate the location of the candidate and where it is commonly found in North Dakota, and basic facts about the stone. The club advisors read and analyzed the candidate forms entered, and 5 viable candidates were selected in October: Chalcedony, Aventurine, Prairie Agate, Moss Agate, and Knife River Flint.

For over a month, the Bottineau Rockhounds campaigned with posters, flags, stickers and even speeches for their chosen candidate. The election frenzy even crept over to the Dakota College at Bottineau into science labs, as students learned about the geologic formations of North Dakota and the unique rocks found here. In November, North Dakota “Rocked the Vote,” with the Bottineau Public School students voting, along with students, faculty, and staff at the Dakota College of Bottineau. Local schools and two other rock clubs in the state (Grand Forks and Bismarck) were invited to vote as well and when the dust cleared and the votes were tallied - 56% of the hundreds of votes collected went to Knife River Flint.

While most stories might end there, our Bottineau Rockhounds were feeling inspired and took their efforts another step forward by writing letters of support and sending their work off to our state representatives. Our group was honored and surprised with a visit by our district representatives in early December and after a short meeting with our club, District 6 Representatives excitedly proclaimed they would be drafting a bill to put into legislative session for a state rock – Knife River Flint – for North Dakota.

It’s no surprise why Knife River Flint would be a perfect rock selection for our state, which already can claim Teredo Wood as its state fossil. Knife River Flint has been utilized as a tool by civilizations for thousands of years and has been so widely used and traded, that pieces have ended up around the nation, thousands of miles away. Knife River Flint is

unique in that it is fluorescent, an effect that doesn't exist in all other flints. The Knife River Flint quarries in North Dakota are considered some of the most actively used flint quarries in the country. Knife River Flint holds cultural importance to many peoples of our incredible state and it's time to recognize its importance. There are already historic sites in our state that honor of the importance of this rock ([Crowley Flint Quarry State Historic Site - State Historical Society of North Dakota](#)).

As you all know, in January 2025, House Bill 1186 was born – a bill to put forth Knife River Flint as North Dakota's official state rock. Several students and their rock club advisors traveled down to the state capital to speak at the House Committee hearing the bill and it not only passed the committee but the house itself, with a vote of 89 to 1.

We're incredibly proud of our junior rockhounds and their energy and passion for learning, not only about geology, but also about the civic process and how to have your voices heard by the people who can really make a difference. We are excited to continue to see this bill through and encourage the Committee Members to pass HB 1186 so others in our state can be inspired and learn more about North Dakota's incredible history.

Our Bottineau Rockhounds Club looks forward to sharing this testimony with the Senate Committee in person on Friday, March 14th.

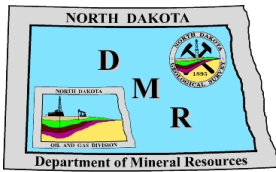
Sincerely,

Michelle Cauley

David Cauley

Carrie Reimche

And the 35 Bottineau Rockhounds club members



House Bill 1186

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

March 14, 2025

Testimony of Ed Murphy, State Geologist, DMR – Geological Survey

I appear today in support of Knife River Flint as the North Dakota State Rock. In fact, I appeared before this committee 30 years ago in support of Knife River Flint as the State Rock. However, that bill went down in defeat along with the hopes and dreams of the students that had supported that bill.

I believe there are six rocks that could rightfully be considered for state rock status. By far the most abundant rocks throughout 75% of the state are glacial erratics, rocks that the glacier brought down from Canada. Although these encompass a wide variety of igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rock types, they fall under the category of glacial erratics. The vast majority of rocks picked by North Dakota farmers over the years have been glacial erratics.

The other five are all silica-rich or siliceous rocks, cryptocrystalline quartz; the Taylor Bed, Rhame Bed, HS Bed, Knife River Flint and Rainy Butte Chert. These five rocks are all found in southwestern North Dakota.

- Rainy Butte Chert is reddish-brown in color and is often found as silicified wood.
- The Taylor and Rhame beds are silcretes that are associated with ancient soil horizons and are found throughout much of southwestern ND, in places they are so abundant at the surface that those areas are difficult to walk across.
- The HS Bed and Knife River Flint are both flints, but the HS Bed is found in place stratigraphically in Stark County while Knife River Flint has never been found in place stratigraphically. It is present at the surface or in gravel deposits in Dunn, Mercer, Oliver, Morton, and Burleigh counties. Knife River Flint is typically black where the HS Bed is grayish-black to gray. Both rocks can have a thick, well-developed white to cream colored weathering rind called a patina.

Although all five of these siliceous rocks have been found as projective points and tools, Knife River Flint rises above all others due to its workability. For that reason, it was first mined in North Dakota 11,000 or more years ago and was an important trade commodity. It has been found in archaeological sites throughout a large portion of the U.S.